

Seattle Parks and Recreation  
Boat launching facilities

## FRESHWATER

- **Atlantic City Boat Ramp**  
S Henderson & Seward Park Ave S
- **14th Ave NW**  
14th Ave NW - East of Ballard Bridge
- **Magnuson Park**  
Sandpoint Way NE & NE 65th St
- **Sunnyside Ave N Ramp**  
2301 N Northlake Way
- **Stan Sayres Boat Ramp**  
3800 Lake Washington Blvd S

## SALTWATER

- **Don Armeni Boat Ramp**  
1228 Harbor Ave SW
- **Eddie Vine Boat Ramp**  
8001 Seaview Ave NW - Adjacent to  
Golden Gardens Park

## LAUNCH PERMITS

**Daily and Overnight Permits available  
from on-site fee machine or kiosk.**

- Ticket valid for day of issue only.
- Trailers left without vehicles may be impounded.
- Parked vehicles with trailers must display launching permit.

Payment for Boat Ramp use is required at:  
**Atlantic City, Don Armeni, Eddie Vine, Magnuson,**  
and **Stan Sayres**

## Rules of the Road

All vessels operating on USCG federally regulated waterways must comply with the International Rules for Preventing Collisions at Sea (Commonly called 72 COLREGS).

These rules define such things as right of way, safe speed, required equipment, etc. All state and local laws conform to the COLREGS.

## More information

For more information about PWC laws and boating safety, contact:

SEATTLE POLICE DEPARTMENT  
HARBOR PATROL  
206-684-4071

SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION  
BOAT RAMPS  
206-684-7249

US COAST GUARD AUXILIARY 13th Dist  
1-800-982-8813 ext. 7020



Seattle Parks and Recreation  
100 Dexter Ave N. Seattle WA 98109

206-684-4075

[www.seattle.gov/parks](http://www.seattle.gov/parks)

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# Personal Watercraft Operation

## Laws and Safety Tips



### What is a personal watercraft?

Personal Watercraft (PWCs) are small vessels that use an inboard jet drive for propulsion, and are designed for the operator to sit, stand, or kneel on the vessel. PWCs are considered a class A vessel (power boat under 16 feet) by the U S Coast Guard, and must follow all the rules and regulations applicable to power boats, along with some laws specific to PWCs.



## Laws and Regulations

The following is a list of laws and requirements for personal watercraft operators.

### **PERSONAL FLOATATION DEVICE (PFD):**

All PWC operators and passengers must wear a U S Coast Guard approved floatation device (life jacket).

**EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT:** Every PWC must have a type B-1 fire extinguisher on board. PWC operators are required to have a whistle or other sound making device to signal for help. If the PWC is equipped with a safety lanyard or "kill switch", it must be worn by the operator to stop the PWC if the operator is ejected from the PWC.

**AGE LIMITS:** The operator of a PWC must be at least 14 years of age, and it is illegal to rent or lease a PWC to someone under 16 years of age.

**HOURS OF OPERATION:** PWCs may be operated between sunrise and sunset.

**LANDING/ANCHORING:** Boats may land only in designated areas. Power driven boats and PWCs are prohibited from beaching on any city park in Seattle. The only authorized anchorage area is Andrews Bay near Seward Park. No vessel may remain at a public boat launch for more than 15 minutes.

**PROHIBITED AREAS:** Vessels must stay at least 100 yds from any bridge, except for designated channels used to pass under the bridge, and all power boats must stay at least 100 yds from any swim area or fishing pier.

**NEGLIGENT OPERATION:** It is unlawful to operate a vessel in a manner so as to endanger or likely endanger any person or property or operate at a rate of speed greater than will permit him/her to exercise reasonable care or control of the vessel (Such as wake jumping too close to boats, speeding too close to other vessels, the shoreline, swimming beaches or launch ramps).

**SPEEDING:** Vessels are limited to a maximum speed of 7 knots (8 mph):

Within 100 yards of any shoreline, pier, shore installation or restricted area in Lake Washington.

Within 200 yards of any shoreline or pier in Puget Sound.

In all waters of the Lake Washington Ship Canal, from Webster Point to Shilshole Bay, including Union Bay, Portage Bay and Lake Union.

Vessels may not exceed 3 knots in Andrews Bay and Rainier Beach.

**REGISTRATION/VESSEL NUMBERING:** All PWCs must be registered, and the operator must carry the certificate of registration on board. Registration numbers, along with the yearly decal, must be displayed, in a contrasting color from the hull, on both sides of the forward section of the hull.

**BOATER EDUCATION CARD:** Effective January of 2008, the State of Washington requires boat operators to obtain and carry a boater education card, starting with those 20 years of age and younger, and phasing in older boaters in the coming years

For other boating related laws in Seattle, see the Harbor Code (SMC section 16)

## Safety Tips

PWCs are propelled by forcing a high pressure jet of water out of a nozzle at the stern of the PWC. The PWC is steered by directing the nozzle from one side to the other, pushing the PWC in that direction.

IF THE ENGINE GOES TO IDLE OR SHUTS OFF, ALL STEERING CONTROL IS LOST AND THE PWC WILL CONTINUE IN A STRAIGHT LINE.

Many serious PWC accidents occur when the operator lets off the throttle and is unable to steer away from danger.

Wear a wetsuit or other protective clothing. Most PWC manufacturers don't recommend wearing just a swim suit as impacting the water at high speed or getting caught behind the jet nozzle can cause serious injury. Protective eye-wear, gloves and deck shoes will also prevent injury.

Don't drink and ride: Alcohol and drugs affect you judgment. The added affect of sun, motion, and physical exertion compounds the effects of alcohol and increases the risk of being involved in an accident.

Take a boating safety course offered by organizations such as the Coast Guard Auxiliary or Power Squadron.

Irresponsible acts by a few operators and careless operation by new or uninformed riders and owners have resulted in numerous boating accidents throughout Washington State. Most of these accidents involve injuries and some have resulted in death. Accidents involving PWCs have almost doubled in the last few years.